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James D. Fielder, Jr., Ph. D.  
Secretary

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 22, 2021

TO: Dr. Jay Perman, University System of Maryland  
Dr. Bernie Sadusky, Maryland Association of Community Colleges  
Dr. Tuajuanda Jordan, Saint Mary's College of Maryland  
Dr. David Wilson, Morgan State University

FROM: James D. Fielder, Jr., Ph.D.   
Secretary

SUBJECT: §11-406 – Plan for Program of Cultural Diversity

This memo is designed to provide additional guidance regarding the requirements for the annual Cultural Diversity report. Please read this memo carefully, as changes have been made from prior year's reports. In particular, please note the revised components of the report and the associated page limits.

In accordance with §11-406 of the Education Article (attached), the governing body of each Maryland public college and university is required to develop and implement a plan for a program of cultural diversity. These plans must be submitted to each institution's board by July 1, 2021.

Further, statute requires that each institution submit, by September 1 of each year, a report to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) summarizing institutional progress toward the implementation of its plan for cultural diversity. According to statute, the Commission must monitor each institution's progress toward achieving the goals outlined in its plan and ensure compliance with the State's goals for higher education.

Additionally, the Commission is required to report its findings to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee; the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee; the House Appropriations Committee; and the House Committee on Ways and Means by December 1 of each year. Letters further outlining the specific statutory requirements contained in §11-406 have been distributed to all presidents.

This year's report is designed to minimize the reporting burden on institutions while ensuring that each institution continues to make progress with the diversity goals of the State Plan. In accordance with this, each institutional submission should include a **brief narrative (no more than three pages)**, consisting of the sections outlined below. Please ensure all submissions adhere to these guidelines. Additional supplemental information such as data analysis or more comprehensive programmatic information may be provided as an appendix, but the core narrative should not exceed this three-page limit.

- A description of how the institution defines diversity (no more than **one page**); how did the institution develop that definition (e.g., processes, sources, and guidance used)?
- A brief (no more than **one page**) highlight of the *most successful* ongoing and new institutional initiatives designed to address issues related to cultural diversity within the campus and the broader community, and how their efficacy is measured;
- A brief (no more than **one page**) discussion of the ways in which the institution anticipates COVID-19 most affecting– either negatively or positively – its efforts to enhance diversity on its campus or campuses. This may include, for example, acknowledgement of issues such as disproportionate impacts on retention and graduation among certain populations; the shift to distance education modalities limiting the ability to provide in-person programming; or, in contrast, the shift to online education providing opportunity for more students to access diversity programming.

In addition to these narratives, each institution should provide, **as an appendix**, a copy of the diversity plan in place during the reporting year (Academic Year 2020-2021). This should be the plan approved by the institution’s Board on or before July 1, 2020. Note that the required elements of this plan are defined in §11-406 of the Education Article.

Along with a narrative summary provided by MHEC, the Commission will include, unedited, these institutional reports and Cultural Diversity plans in the 2021 Report on Institutional Programs of Cultural Diversity.

Please submit your narratives and 2020-2021 Cultural Diversity Plan **in searchable PDF format** and the completed cover sheet at [http://bit.ly/MHEC\\_CD\\_2021](http://bit.ly/MHEC_CD_2021). Any submissions not including the required cover sheet or in excess of the three-page limit will be returned to the institution for revision.

Electronic copies of these documents must be submitted on or before Wednesday, September 1, 2021, in accordance with statutory requirements. **Please note that MHEC does not have the statutory authority to grant exceptions to this deadline. If your governing board does not meet during the summer months, please ensure you provide sufficient time for approval prior to this statutory deadline for submission to the Commission.** Additionally, please note that any necessary revisions may require additional board approval; if there are questions regarding the required elements of the submission, please ensure that you contact the Commission as soon as possible for clarification to ensure that you will remain compliant with the September 1 statutory deadline for submission to MHEC.

If you have any further questions about this report, please feel free to contact the Commission directly.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Enclosure

cc: Ms. Sara Fidler, Maryland Independent College and University Association